

## **Ground Gourmet Essentials December 2007 Newsletter**

Welcome to our final newsletter for 2007. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our loyal customers who not only buy and use our products but who also give us fantastic feedback.

2007 has been a big year for us here at Ground with the opening of the Culinary Centre in Lyttelton. The store has really broadened our horizons! We now have two professional chefs working for us full-time and they are constantly experimenting with new ways to use our spice blends and dukkahs in their cooking. The additional kitchen space has also enabled us to experiment with new product development, so we have lots of ideas to share with you.

In this newsletter:

- New ways of using spice blends and dukkahs
- New product development
- Christmas gift ideas
- Spice of the Month
- Recipe of the Month – or what to do with the Christmas Turkey!
- Seasons Greetings

### **New ways of using spice blends and dukkahs**

Since it's the time of year where we all do a lot of entertaining, why not make it simple for yourself by using some of our sumptuous spice blends and delicious dukkahs! Here are a few simple entertaining ideas to help impress your guests, easily (there are many more on our web site [www.ground.co.nz](http://www.ground.co.nz)):

**Barbecuing chicken:** To give a golden-brown finish and fantastic flavour, make a simple marinade for chicken (use chicken nibbles or boned chicken thighs) by mixing together extra-virgin olive oil, orange juice, fresh herbs, and either our Baharat or Ras al Hanout spice blend with a little salt and pepper. Marinade for at least an hour before grilling. This marinade is also gorgeous with duck. If you are in Canterbury and looking to buy some duck, pop in and see us in the shop.

**Barbecuing other meat & veggies:** Some suggestions for jazzing up other barbecue dishes:

- \* Venison is fantastic with a sprinkle of our Berbere. Mix with olive oil before rubbing on to the meat, then sit for at least 20 minutes before grilling.
- \* Lamb back straps are lean and tasty, and cook quickly. Rub them with a little Baharat or Ras al Hanout, then cook for a few minutes each side. Rest before serving. A lovely way to present back straps is to slice thinly and serve on a spinach and boiled potato salad with grilled red onions and eggplant, and kalamata olives.
- \* Our friend, Rhona, enjoys cooking chunks of mushrooms, eggplant, courgettes and the like on the barbecue after tossing the vegetables in olive oil and Baharat, then serving it all on a large platter. You can also try making

these into vegetable kebabs before cooking.

Side dishes and nibbles: Of course, it's easy just to open any of our dukkahs and serve with bread and oil as a dip, but did you know the dukkahs also make a delicious, crunchy and oil-free salad dressing? Simply sprinkle over a green or potato salad et voila! We particularly enjoy our Spezie or Pounamu Dukkah on a green salad.

Spezie is a Sicilian blend, often used on pizzas, but is also nice as a fragrant and crunchy snack on flat breads. Brush breads brushed with a little olive oil, sprinkle with Spezie then grill lightly.

For an easy dip, mash ripe avocado with our Dukkah.

For a tasty treat with drinks, our Dukkah also makes a nice addition to "miniature" omelettes. Mix eggs with Dukkah and finely chopped spring onion and fresh herbs. Cook teaspoonfuls in hot olive oil – they cook quickly – then drain on paper towels and keep warm before serving. Season with salt and pepper.

### **New Product Development**

The Ground deli kitchen is the perfect place for us to test new ideas. The best of these have been finding their way into the shop. Look out for:

Kiwi Fruit Pastille – great with crackers.

Our new Sweet Spice blend – *perfect* for all that Christmas baking.

Lime Salt with horopito pepper and kawa kawa – a real taste of New Zealand, and great as a gift or seasoning at the Christmas dinner table.

Pounamu Lime Dressing – another taste of New Zealand, perfect for easy salads.

Berberere Marinade – a spicy marinade sure to impress, excellent for barbecuing and roasting meats and vegetables. So easy!

### **Christmas Gift Ideas**

We have a whole range of gift ideas for foodie friends or if you need to drop hints to your own nearest and dearest !

Gift packs with a selection from the Ground Gourmet Essentials range of spice blends and dukkahs.

Gift-wrapped Mortar and Pestles in 3 sizes with complimentary whole spices.

Quality kitchen equipment and inspirational books about food and cooking.

A wide selection of interesting and hard-to-find wines and beers.

Gourmet groceries and delightful deli goodies from New Zealand and around the world for you to add to your own gift basket.

Tea towels, aprons, stationery etc from the Cecily range, or with gorgeous images of New Zealand (designed and made here in Lyttelton).

And there is much more inspiration to be found in store, so pop in to see us soon. Our hours are 10 am – 7.30pm Mon-Sat, and 11am – 5pm Sundays.

### **Spice of the Month**

So evocative of Christmas is the smell of Pimento or Allspice. It is the dried and cured berry from a tropical evergreen tree native to Jamaica, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras and southern Mexico.

The first record of what was probably allspice, occurs in the journal of Columbus's first journey in 1492. He showed the local Indians of Cuba some peppercorns and they indicated by sign language that they recognised them and that lots grew nearby. Thus the confusion of naming began with allspice being given the botanical name *Pimenta*, the Spanish name for Pepper. The Aztecs added allspice, along with vanilla, in a chocolate drink and the Mayan Indians included it in the embalming process.

Allspice is found in many sweet recipes for cakes and biscuits. Some cooks prefer to use it in place of cloves in sweet dishes as the flavour is more subtle. The Scandinavians include it in their famous marinated raw herrings and it often features in pickles, pates and smoked meats.

Use whole allspice berries when you want the flavour without the dark-brown powder colouring the recipe. One delicious idea is to add a few allspice berries to fruits as you stew them along with a cinnamon quill, whole star anise and a vanilla bean. While it is no relation to pepper, a common practice is to put about a teaspoon of allspice berries into the pepper mill. When freshly ground together, the aromatic sweet spiciness of allspice complements pepper very well.

### **Recipe of the Month – or what to do with the Christmas Turkey!**

Here are a few tips from Stephanie Alexander's *The Cook's Companion* on what to do with the Christmas turkey. Stephanie's book provides you with all the information you need to know on how to stuff and roast the turkey.

Hot tip: For a beautifully basted and browned bird, use buttered muslin. Wet the muslin first, wring out, then douse it in seasoned butter and wrap your bird in it. There is no need to baste. Stephanie said the result is superior to using oven bags or foil.

Leftovers: Don't get sick of reheated turkey meat! Try adding it to pie fillings, or make tasty, easy pasties. Stephanie suggests making Turkey and Chutney Pasties with cooked onions, cooked turkey meat, cooked sweet potato, chutney, Dijon mustard, parsley and salt and pepper. Use a shortcrust pastry for the pasties. These can be eaten warm or cold. Enjoy!

Turkeys can still be ordered through our store in time for Christmas, but be quick, as they are selling fast! Stephanie Alexander's book, *The Cook's Companion*, can also be ordered through us. We love it and refer to it regularly!

### **Seasons Greetings**

*We hope that you all have a wonderful, relaxing, safe and happy festive*

*season. There is something really special about the love and thought that goes in to preparing food for your family and friends to share at this special time of year, so enjoy your cooking, and if there is anything we can help with to make it easier for you, please get in touch.*

*Merry Christmas from all at Ground!*

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